

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00
CIAE-00 PM-05 INR-10 L-03 ACDA-12 NSAE-00 PA-01
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O 131809Z APR 78
FM USMISSION USNATO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0710
AMEMBASSY ROME IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMCONSUL NAPLES
ALL NATO CAPITALS
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT
USNMR SHAPE BE
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON ENG

S E C R E T USNATO 03778

E.O.11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: NATO, IT, UR
SUBJECT: ITALIAN CONCERN ABOUT SOVIET REQUEST FOR ACCESS
TO NAPLES SHIP REPAIR FACILITIES

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REFS: (A) ROME 6816 (DTG 122120Z APR 78)
(B) USNATO 3738 (DTG 121839Z APR 78)

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1. IN LIGHT OF USEFUL EMBASSY ROME COMMENTS (REF A) AND
IF DEPARTMENT RESPONDS POSITIVELY TO REQUEST (REF B) FOR
AUTHORIZATION TO ARRANGE PRIVATE MEETING OF PERMREPS ON
SOVIET REQUESTS FOR ACCESS TO SHIP REPAIR FACILITIES, WE
HAVE THE FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND REQUESTS FOR
SUPPLEMENTAL GUIDANCE:

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(A) MODALITIES OF CALLING THE PRIVATE MEETING: WE AGREE
WITH THRUST OF REF A THAT IT WOULD BE PREFERABLE FOR
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ITALIANS TO BE MORE IN LEAD AND US LESS SO IN RAISING ISSUE
OF SOVIET ACCESS TO NAPLES SHIP REPAIR FACILITIES. HOWEVER,
SINCE ITALIANS ARE CLEARLY NOT INCLINED TO BRING MATTER
UP THEMSELVES, WE BELIEVE WE SHOULD TRY TO MODERATE
SOMEWHAT IMPRESSION THAT THIS IS US INITIATIVE. WE WOULD
PROPOSE TO REQUEST THE PRIVATE MEETING NOT SPECIFICALLY
ON SOVIET ACCESS ISSUE, BUT ON NUMBER OF ISSUES INCLUDING

SECRETARY'S TRIP TO MOSCOW. WE WOULD ASK LUNS TO SAY, FOLLOWING CONSIDERATION OF THESE ISSUES, THAT A NUMBER OF PERMREPS HAD VOICED THEIR CONCERN OVER SOVIET EFFORTS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN, HAD NOTED REPORTED SOVIET APPROACHES TO ITALY IN THIS REGARD, AND HAD ASKED HIM TO RAISE SUBJECT SO THAT ITALIAN DELEGATION COULD HAVE BENEFIT OF VIEWS OF OTHER ALLIES. WE BELIEVE LUNS WOULD AGREE TO THIS. WE WOULD OF COURSE COORDINATE WITH HIM, CATALANO, AND PETRIGNANI IN ADVANCE. SHOULD LUNS BE RELUCTANT FOR SOME REASON, WE WOULD SURFACE ISSUE OURSELVES AS A LEGITIMATE MATTER OF ALLIANCE CONCERN. (NOTE: WE HAVE AN ADDITIONAL HOOK ON WHICH TO JUSTIFY OUR PRESENTATION ON THIS ISSUE AS A RESULT OF FINAL DRAFTING SESSION APRIL 13 OF REPORT ON SOVIET PENETRATION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN (PARA 3, REF B). IN THIS SESSION, US REP CONTINUED TO UNDERLINE IMPORTANCE OF ISSUE OF SOVIET EFFORTS TO GAIN ACCESS TO MEDITERRANEAN PORTS AND NECESSITY FOR ALLIANCE TO MONITOR CLOSELY SOVIET ACTIVITIES IN THIS REGARD THROUGHOUT AREA. ITALIAN TOOK OPPORTUNITY ON THIS OCCASION (AS HE HAD NOT ON PREVIOUS ONES) TO SUPPORT STRONGLY US POSITION, AND TO SUGGEST THAT US DELEGATION OR OTHERS WITH SIMILAR CONCERNS RAISE PROBLEM AND ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION IN NAC WHEN MED REPORT CONSIDERED. HE NOTED, WITHOUT NAMING THEM, THAT SOME "WESTERN COUNTRIES" HAD BEEN APPROACHED BY USSR. ACCORDINGLY, WE WOULD PLAN TO BUILD ON THIS IN PERMREPS MEETING TO SAY THAT ISSUE OF SOVIET ACCESS HAS BEEN GIVEN SECRET

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FURTHER IMMEDIACY BY FOCUS AND LIVELY DISCUSSION OF PROBLEM IN MED REPORT DRAFTING SESSION AND EXPRESSIONS OF CONCERN BY VARIOUS DELEGATIONS, INCLUDING US AND ITALY.)

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(B) ACCESS TO US FACILITIES BY SOVIET MERCHANT VESSELS: WE NOTE IN REF A AND PREVIOUS TRAFFIC THAT SOVIET SHIPS UNDERGO REPAIRS IN AMERICAN PORTS UPON OCCASION AND WOULD APPRECIATE GUIDANCE ON HOW TO HANDLE THIS POINT IN PERMREPS DISCUSSION IN VIEW OF PROBABLE ITALIAN REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON PRACTICES OF OTHER NATO ALLIES.

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(C) SOVIET USE OF PORTS OTHER THAN NAPLES: ONE APPROACH TO DEFLECT ISSUE IN (B) ABOVE MIGHT BE TO NOTE DISTINCTION BETWEEN PORTS WHICH MILITARY SHIPS OF NATO ALLIES USE AND THOSE THEY DO NOT. WE NOTE EMBASSY ROME'S VIEW THAT ITALIANS MIGHT BE SEEKING TACIT ALLIANCE BLESSING FOR ALLOWING SOVIET ACCESS TO LATTER CATEGORY (I.E., PALERMO). IN VIEW OF OUR OWN PRACTICES WE MIGHT FIND IT USEFUL TO ACCEDE RELUCTANTLY, WHILE UNDERLINING OPPOSITION TO SOVIET ACCESS TO PORTS WHICH ENHANCE THE USSR'S ABILITY TO MAINTAIN WARSHIPS AND NAVAL AUXILIARIES ON STATION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN, AND IN PARTICULAR THOSE SUCH AS NAPLES

WHICH ARE OF CENTRAL IMPORTANCE TO THE ALLIANCE.

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ACTION REQUESTED: GUIDANCE ON ABOVE POINTS FOR POSSIBLE
APRIL 14 PRIVATE PERMREPS MEETING. XENNETT

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NNN

Message Attributes

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